

A N

A C C O U N T

O F T H E

D E S C E N T

William Le Grosvenor, Esq;

now living in

B E W D L E Y

IN THE

COUNTY OF WORCESTER.

JULY 9th, 1776.



И А

Т И У О С С А

Д Н Т Ч О

THIS Account was wrote, partly,
for the information of very many
people, who have been inquisitive con-
cerning the Subject of it; and partly,
from a principle of justice, and to
undeceive the world, with respect to
THE HEAD, OR HEIR-MALE OF THE
GROSVENOR FAMILY IN THIS KINGDOM.

Д Н Т И

Я З Р Г З Я О М Ч О У Т И С С А

• 1771 die July

Bewdley, Worcestershire,
July 9th, 1776.

IT is imagined that the following Account of the Descent of William Le Grosvenor, Esq; now living in Bewdley, will be sufficient to satisfy all candid and impartial Persons concerning the same.

William Le Grosvenor, Esq; now living in this town of Bewdley, is descended from the famous Sir Robert Le Grosvenor, of Hulme, in the county of Chester, Knt. who had a great and well known contest with Scroop, Lord Chancellor of England, in the Reign of Richard the Second, concerning their coat of arms. This Sir Robert was the eighth in lineal descent from, and heir-male of, Gilbert Le Grosvenor, nephew to Hugh Lupus, the first Earl of Chester, who was nephew to King William, the Norman Conqueror.

It is to be observed, that the heir-male, and none but the heir-male, of the Grosvenor Family in this kingdom, was called by the name of Le Grosvenor for three or four hundred years from the Norman Conquest, or for longer time than that; and that none else can, could, or ought to be called, with any degree of propriety, by this appellation; as it distinguishes the head or heir-male of this family from all the rest, by making him appear as THE GROSVENOR, or as THE HEAD OR PRIMARY BRANCH OF THE GROSVENOR FAMILY. The same Rule that was just, right, fit, or proper for three or four hundred

years, must be so for as many more years, or for ever. And it is apprehended, and with great reason believed, that the right heir or head of this family, in every succeeding period of time, would have kept up this distinction, and would have been so distinguished, if he had not been in a state of ignorance or obscurity, or inability to support his right and title to it, and to such estate or estates as were, or might be, his birthright in consequence of his right of heirship.

Let us now trace the descent of this William Le Grosvenor from this Gilbert, who came into England along with, or soon after, his kinsman William Duke of Normandy, afterwards King of England, and his said uncle the Earl of Chester.

This Gilbert was Master of the Hunt to this monarch William Duke of Normandy. He married, and had a son and heir Robert Le Grosvenor; who had a son Henry; who was the father of Radulph, Ranulph, or Randolph Le Grosvenor; who was succeeded by his son and heir Richard Le Grosvenor; who was likewise succeeded by his son and heir Robert Le Grosvenor, who married Emma the daughter of William de Mobberley, and by her had a son and heir Robert (or, as it is at the Herald's Office, Radulph) Le Grosvenor; who married Emma the daughter of Waring de Mainwaring de Pever, and by her had issue Sir Radulph (or, as it is expressed

presled in Wotton's Baronettage, *Raufe*, that is Ralph) Le Grosvenor de Holme, Knt. who married Matilda the relict of Joseph Hatton. This Raufe, Ralph, or Radulph, was the father of the before-mentioned Sir Robert Le Grosvenor, who maintained a long and expensive contest with the said Scroop concerning his coat of arms as aforesaid. This Sir Robert was the lineal descendant and heir-male of the before-mentioned Gilbert; and this Sir Robert married a daughter of Sir Robert Pulford, Knt. and by her had issue Sir Thomas Le Grosvenor, Knt. his son and heir, who married Joan, one of the daughters and co-heirs of Sir William Pheasant, Knt. by whom he had issue three sons, viz. first Robert, second Radulph, Ranulph, or Randolph (contracted thus *Ralph*), and third Thomas. Some people, from base or interested motives, have strove hard to make out a fourth son, by saying that Radulph was the second son, and Ranulph or Randolph was the fourth son of this Sir Thomas; but this gains no credit; because the heralds and all persons versed in the records of antiquity agree, that Radulph, Ranulph, and Randolph, are only different ways of spelling the same Saxon name; and that Ralph is a contracted word for all or any of these. Isaac Heard, Esq; the present Norroy King at Arms, lately declared himself to be of this opinion. Besides, it is not likely that a man should have two sons living

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At the same time so near of a name as Radulph is to Ranulph. Robert, the eldest son of the said Sir Thomas Le Grosvenor, had six daughters, but no son; whereupon the second son Radulph or Ranulph, became the heir-male of this family. This Radulph or Ranulph, commonly called Ralph Le Grosvenor, married Joan, the sole daughter and heir of John Eaton, of Eton, Etton, or Eaton, near Chester, Esq; and by her had issue three sons, viz, first Robert, second John, and third James. Robert the first son died without issue male, or his male issue soon became extinct; and then William, the son and heir of his next brother John (John being dead), succeeded to the Eaton estate as his birthright, and bore the Grosvenors' Arms pure, viz. Azure, a Garb Or, as being the heir-male of this family. This William is registered at the Herald's Office as being William Grosvenor, of Etton: and this William had four sons, viz. first John (who it is apprehended succeeded him at Eaton), second Humphry, third William, and fourth Rowland. All these bore the arms of the sons of the first house, and they all married and left male issue; all which issue continued constantly, regularly, and successively to make use of the armorial bearings of the first house. The male issue of John, the eldest son, became extinct after three generations; but THAT OF HUMPHRY, THE SECOND SON, IS CONTINUED DOWN

DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME, WITH
THE ARMS OF THE FIRST HOUSE. The
precise time in which the male issue
of this John became extinct is not quite
ascertained; but it is supposed to have been
about the middle of the last century. Un-
doubtedly some of them lived in a state of
obscurity, and knew nothing of their right
of heirship to the Eaton estate or family, or
were unable to support their claim. Humphry,
the second son of William Grosvenor,
of Etton, is called at the Herald's Office a
younger brother of the Eaton family. He
married a lady of Staffordshire, by whom he
had issue John Grosvenor, of Tettenhall, near
Wolverhampton, his son and heir; who mar-
ried Rose, the eldest daughter and co-heir of
John Clayton, de Harwood Parva, in the
county of Lancaster. She was also a joint
heiress of Bushbury, with Helen her younger
sister; who married William, the son of
Richard Levison, of Wolverhampton, Esq.
John and Rose had issue Walter Grosvenor,
of Bushbury, Esq; their son and heir; who
married a daughter of John Fowke, of
Gunstone, near Codfall, in the county of
Stafford, Esq; and by her had issue Jonas
Grosvenor, of Bushbury, Esq; his son and heir;
who married Elizabeth, the daughter of
Humphry Cotton, of Bold Hall, and by
her had issue three sons, viz. first Walter,
second Thomas, and third Edward. The
male

male issue of Walter, the eldest son, became extinct after three generations, viz. in the year 1732, by the death of John Grosvenor or Le Grosvenor, late of Wolverhampton, Esq. Walter Grosvenor or Le Grosvenor the grandfather, Jonas the father, and Jonas and Archibald the two eldest brothers of this John, lived chiefly at Newbridge, at or near Tattenhall aforesaid; tho' they sometimes resided at Wolverhampton, and sometimes at Bushbury: but whether they resided at Bushbury or not, it is certain they were in possession of the Bushbury estate. Thomas, the second son of the before-mentioned Jonas Grosvenor, married, and settled at a place called The Stockings, in the parish of Codfall, and county of Stafford, near Wolverhampton, and had issue William Grosvenor, of The Stockings, Gent. his son and heir; who married Elizabeth, sole daughter and heir of Richard Marshall, of Codfall aforesaid, by whom he had issue William Grosvenor, of The Stockings, Gent. his son and heir; who in the year 1686 married Mary, sole daughter and heir of Thomas Cherne, of Withington, in the county of Salop, Gent. by whom he had three sons, all born at Withington, viz. first Thomas, second Richard, and third William; all of whom died unmarried, except William, the third son, who married, and died at Kidderminster in the life-time of his father and brothers. This William, the third son, married Sarah, the eldest daughter of

Henry Sanders or Saunders, of Stourbridge, in the county of Worcester, Gent. by whom he had issue one only son, viz. the said William Le Grosvenor, now living in Bewdley aforesaid. He is a Physician by Diploma from the President and Elect Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians of London. It appears clearly to him and others, that he is the heir-male of the before-mentioned Gilbert Le Grosvenor, and of the famous Sir Robert Le Grosvenor, and of Ralph Le Grosvenor and Joan his wife, the heiress of Eaton; and therefore he cannot but be of opinion, that he hath a right to call himself, and to be called, by the name and appellation of WILLIAM LE GROSVENOR, and to bear the Grosvenors' Arms pure; which arms are, Azure, a Garb Or *; with a Talbot Or *, without a Collar, for a Crest, standing on a wreath of his colours.

In consequence of his being an orphan at about five years of age, by the loss of his father at Kidderminster, he has been privately surrounded by an infernal crew of villains and wolves in sheep's cloathing; who have found means to rob him of his property, to get possession of, and to withhold from him, the greatest part of his inheritance, and to obstruct justice while he was using his best endeavours to obtain it, particularly with respect to The Stockings estate. Some of these villains have formed many schemes and made several at-

* Or, in these places, signifies Gold.

tempts to deprive him of his life; and have very lately burnt down his house and barn in Codfall.

The Stockings, Withington, and Bushbury estates have been withheld from him; and, in the opinion of many people, he hath a better title to the Eaton estate than Lord Grosvenor, its present possessor.

He is the undoubted heir-male of the Grosvenor family of The Stockings, Withington, Tettenhall, Newbridge, and Bushbury; and, with submission, he is also the heir-male of the Grosvenor family of Eaton, near Chester.

I am fully persuaded that this account is true; and I find all candid and impartial persons agree with me in sentiment on this occasion: therefore I subscribe my name to it, by the name of

William Le Grosvenor,
Now residing in Bewdley, in the County of
Worcester.

N. B. There is at my house in Bewdley, a regimental or militia drum, with the arms of Grosvenor, of Eaton, blazoned on it, and no other distinction than one crescent. This drum and another, the fellow to it, with halberts, swords, guns, pistols, bows and arrows, quivers, &c. were kept at my grandfather's, at The Stockings, many years.

Postscript.

Sir Robert, the father of Lord Grosvenor, pretended to deduce his descent in the male line from Robert, the eldest son of the said Ralph and Joan, by means of Richard, the pretended second son of this Robert; which Richard we are told, succeeded to the Eaton estate *in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Henry the Seventh*, upon the death of his elder brother Thomas without male issue! We are also told, or given to understand, that this Robert, and his two pretended sons Thomas and Richard, continued in possession of the Eaton estate till the 27th of July, 1542, which was the 34th year of the reign of Henry the Eighth. It is not at all improbable but that this Robert succeeded to the Eaton estate: but all the rest must be mere pretence, and must have been impossible, in case the before-mentioned person, who is registered at the Herald's Office as William Grosvenor, of Etton, had any right to live there, which he undoubtedly did; and to bear the arms of the Grosvenor family pure, which he also did, as the heir-male of the Grosvenor family of Etton. As a confirmation of this, it appears in a pedigree from the Herald's Office, that neither the said Thomas nor Richard, nor any one else of the name or family of Grosvenor, lived at Etton, but this William, while he

was

was living; and that neither the said Thomas nor Richard ever lived there at all; and that this Robert was not succeeded at Etton by any real or pretended son or sons, daughter or daughters. This William was the grandson of the said Ralph and Joan, and he lived at Etton long before the 34th of Henry the Eighth. Mr. Heard, the Herald, said he (this William) was living the 22d of Edward the Fourth. It appears therefore, that there is no dependance on the account given by Lord Grosvenor's father concerning his pretended descent from this Robert. There is as little dependance on what Wotton says in his Baronettage, from the information of Lord Grosvenor's father, and on what is published in the Continuation of Collins's Peerage, and in Barlow's Peerage, concerning the next brother of this Robert; that is, concerning the name of the second son of the said Ralph and Joan. We are told by Wotton in one place, that his name was Richard; in another, we are given to understand it was Raufe: we are told in the Continuation that his name was Richard, but he was by some called Raufe: and we are told by Barlow that his name was Richard, without mentioning the name of Raufe or Ralph at all. The books at the Herald's Office are silent about him. We are there told a strange story; that the said Ralph and Joan had a first and third son, but no second son! Wonderful! However, there certainly

certainly was a second son who lived to marry and have children; and his name was neither Raufe, nor Ralph, nor Richard, but John as aforesaid.

When people tell a tale, which they would have the world believe to be a true one, it certainly should be consistent with itself, and have the air of probability. I submit it to the public, to judge whether the following account, from the information of Lord Grosvenor's father, concerning Robert (the eldest son and heir of Ralph Le Grosvenor and Joan his wife, the heiress of Eaton,) and of his two pretended sons, viz. Thomas and Richard, hath the marks of consistency or probability, or is true in itself, or not.

By Wotton's account, from the information of Lord Grosvenor's father, it appears that Robert, the eldest son and heir of Ralph Le Grosvenor and Joan his wife, the heiress of Eaton, married in the eighth year of the reign of Henry the Fourth, and died the twelfth year of Henry the Seventh; that is, he married in the year 1406, and lived till the year 1496, according to this account; which must have been so long as ninety years after his marriage. There are very few people live so long as ninety years from the time of their birth, and scarce any, perhaps none at all, live so long after marriage. I will not say that this is impossible, but it is improbable. If it had been true, I am persuaded this Robert

bert would have been upon record, as an extraordinary instance of longevity; but we do not hear of him in this manner.

We are next told, by the same authority, that his eldest son Thomas married in the tenth year of Henry the Seventh, and died in the twenty-seventh year of the same reign! This must be an absolute falsehood, because Henry the Seventh reigned no more than twenty-three years and eight months. We are given clearly to understand, and are indeed told in indirect terms, that Thomas succeeded to the Eaton estate, as the eldest son and heir of this Robert, upon the death of this Robert, and that this Thomas died without issue; whereupon his next brother Richard succeeded to the Eaton estate, and married in the first year of Henry the Eighth, and died in the thirty-fourth year of the same reign. So that, according to this account, this Robert immediately succeeded to the Eaton estate, upon, or after the death of his father and mother, the said Ralph and Joan; and his pretended son and heir Thomas succeeded him; and his second pretended son Richard succeeded this Thomas, and lived at Eaton till the thirty-fourth year of the reign of Henry the Eighth, at which time he died; and one or other of these, according to this account, was, and all of them successively were, in possession of the Eaton estate, till the thirty-fourth year of Henry the Eighth.

Is not the first part of this account extremely improbable? Is not the next absolutely false? And doth not the whole of it comprehend a tale that is highly improbable, viz. That this Robert and his two pretended sons should be constantly in possession of the Eaton estate for so long a time; and yet suffer the said William Grosvenor of Eaton, to live there, and to bear the arms pure, as the right heir of this family, and as being the owner of this estate? No one can believe that they, or any of them, would suffer this William, or any of his sons or grandsons, or any one else, either to live at Eaton as the rightful owner or owners of this estate, or to bear the arms pure, as the heir-male of this family, in case this Robert and his two said pretended sons had been the right heirs and true owners. But I have shewn before, that this William did live at Eaton, and that he and his sons, and their descendants, have regularly and constantly borne the arms pure, and with such distinctions only as of right belong to the first house, and to the first house only, of this family, or of any family. Must we not therefore conclude, from the improbability, falsehood, &c. of Wotton's account, from the information of Lord Grosvenor's father, that it ought not to be credited? Because instead of the marks of truth and authenticity which it ought to have, it hath evident marks of sophistry, fiction, or falsehood? It is an easy matter to forge a pedigree; but it is not quite so easy to get rid of the true one, or to make a forged one consistent.

In

In the year 1773, I wrote a pamphlet in London, intitled, An impartial Account of the Descent of the Grosvenor Family, wherein I was called Dr. William Grosvenor, being so stiled and addressed by Sir Alexander Gordon, Bart. Professor of Medicine in the University of Old Aberdeen, and by the rest of the gentlemen of that University, in consequence of my having been examined and admitted to the Practice of Physic at the College of Physicians of London, and of my having obtained a diploma or testimonium from this College. I have lately discovered that I am the heir-male of the Grosvenor family of Eton, Etton, or Eaton, near Chester, and consequently of the Grosvenor family in this kingdom: I therefore now call myself by the name of William Le Grosvenor, and omit the appellation of Doctor, as being, in the opinion of many people, an inferior title to that of Le Grosvenor. When I began to write that pamphlet, I had no suspicion but Lord Grosvenor was the right heir of Ralph Le Grosvenor who married the heiress of Eaton; I therefore represented his lordship in this light; but I now find that I was mistaken, and that this representation was injurious to myself,

William Le Grosvenor.
April 8; F I N I S
1779.

The author gave me this tract on the day he wrote it and his name. He appeared a singular character, but he was by no means delirious under-standing; and it is not improbable but that his statement is a true and accurate one.

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